



CASLT PODCAST SERIES

Effective Practices for Improving French as a Second Language Education

Why Student Diversity is Not a Bad Thing **Katy Arnett**

About the Author

Katy Arnett is currently working in initial teacher education in the United States. She has also taught French at the secondary level. Her primary research examines how to include students with learning disabilities into core French programs.

Content of this Podcast

Katy explores the topic of student diversity in the core French classroom.

Facts

- ✓ A 2006 research report by Lapkin, McFarlane & Vandergrift points out student diversity as one of the biggest concerns amongst French language teachers.

Common misconceptions:

- The strategies required to reach and teach all learners are not consistent with effective strategies for second language learning.
- The needed strategies are beyond the scope of most core French teachers' resources and pedagogy.

Easy teaching strategies for responding to the needs of children with special needs:

- Pre-teaching key vocabulary;
- Using visuals and gestures to depict and/or reinforce content;

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- Peer collaboration;
- Activities that encourage students to draw on all their language skills;
- Immediate feedback; and
- Positive reinforcement.

Further Reading

Arnett, K. (2006). Walk a mile in their shoes: Understanding learning difficulties in core French. *Réflexions*, 25, 2, 7-8.

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Hutchinson, N.L. (2002). *Inclusion of exceptional learners in Canadian schools: A practical handbook for teachers*. Toronto, ON: Prentice Hall.

Lapkin, S., McFarlane, A., & Vandergrift, L. (2006). *Teaching FSL in Canada: Teachers' perspectives*. CASLT/CAIT/CTF. Available online: www.caslt.org.

Olson, M., Chalmers, L. & Hoover, J. (1997). Attitudes and attributes of general education teachers identified as effective inclusionists. *Remedial & Special Education*, 18, 1, 28-35.

Shrum, J.L. & Glisan, E.W. (2005). *Teacher's handbook: Contextualized language instruction (3rd Ed.)*. New York: Thomson Heinle.